

A SERMON,
ON
OCCASION OF THE DEATH
OF
CLARENCE YONGE WELLS,

PREACHED OCTOBER 20TH, 1850,

AT
ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, TORONTO,

BY THE
REV. J. G. D. MCKENZIE, M.A.,
INCUMBENT.

WEYMOUTH:

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A SERMON,

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"Our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."—2 Tim. i, part of v. 10.

WE are not to conclude from these words of the apostle, that, before the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, there was no knowledge at all of a future state in the world. The Jews, undoubtedly, had a very comforting assurance of immortality, and the Gentiles were not all of them absolutely ignorant and unconcerned about it; but the knowledge possessed even by God's ancient people was an imperfect knowledge, compared with that which the gospel has communicated. "The gospel has cast more light on the subject, than either natural religion, or the law of Moses was able to afford; it has dispelled all doubt and uncertainty; it has given us a better defined hope, a surer proof, and a more evident demonstration."*

* Bishop Sherlock.

The gospel has done this in various ways:—

FIRSTLY.—Its assurances that we shall rise again are most distinct and emphatic. “I am the first and the last,” saith our Lord. “I am he that liveth and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of death.” “He that believeth in me hath everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day.” “The hour is coming in which all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall come forth.” “The sea shall give up the dead that are in it, and death and hell (Hades, the place of departed spirits,) shall deliver up the dead that are in them.”

SECONDLY.—We are expressly assured that the happiness of the good shall be complete, unchangeable, and endless. This the scripture declares in a copious variety of terms. The writers of the New Testament seem to labour for expressions, and to want words strong enough to represent it. Image succeeds image, in the sacred writings, and comparison is added to comparison, to convey some idea of a state of happiness and honour which surpasses description. They call our reward, “an exceeding and eternal weight of glory,” an “unfading crown,” “an incorruptible inheritance.” They tell us that “The righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father,” and shall for ever hold intercourse with the holy angels; live with Jesus, the mediator of the new

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covenant ; and see God, and rejoice in his presence ; and that fear, and ignorance, and doubt, and trouble, and sorrow, and tears, are eternally excluded from those quiet regions.

But, **THIRDLY**.—The strongest assurance which the gospel brings us is in its glorious record of the resurrection of Christ himself. This is St. Paul's grand argument for our future possession of bodies bright, incorruptible, and immortal :—" He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."

The same apostle, with a marvellous conciseness, sums up the statement of the gospel's superior illumination on the subject of happy immortality, in these few emphatic words ;—" Christ in you the hope of glory."

The inheritance of a happy immortality, to the sinner amenable to God's violated law and meriting punishment instead of reward, is a difficulty,—Christ is the explanation of that difficulty : it is a problem,—Christ is the solution of that problem. Christians have this explanation and this solution in the concentrated light of accomplished prophecy, authenticated miracle, and unquestionable fact : the Jews had it only obscurely ; the Gentiles not at all. Both had different degrees of hope ; but neither could give that reason for their hope that we can give.

The captive, imprisoned for the dark crime of treason, and languishing in misery and in iron, under sentence of death, would naturally be amazed were his dungeon door to be thrown open, his chains stricken off, and himself bade to walk out a free and pardoned man. And to his amazement, incredulity would be added, were he assured that it was again in his power to rise to the highest honours in the court of the Prince whose laws he had outraged; whose authority he had conspired to undermine. His incredulity would continue until the conditions of the deliverance and the bounty were explained to him; until sufficient reasons were assigned for such an astonishing display of benevolence. The captive sinner, who has been roused by God's awakening Spirit, and has learned to fathom, in some degree, the depth of his own vileness; who has endeavoured to calculate, in humiliation and fear, the magnitude and the multitude of his transgressions, may be conceived as thus holding counsel with himself:—"How is it that this blessed book of God, holds out to me, not only a promise of pardon, but a title to heaven,—a bright and animating prospect of reward. Such goodness is too high for me; I cannot attain unto it. My heart and my reason at once discard the notion, that my mere repentance, apart from a vicarious atonement, can put me in this state of freedom and hope, as those who deny

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my Lord's divinity pretend. Even if repentance, without an atoning sacrifice, could avert the vengeance, and soften the deserved indignation of an offended God, can it give me a title to reward? Can it put a sceptre in my hand, and a crown on my head? Can it raise me from the degradation of a sinful mortal, to the ranks of the high nobility of the skies? Nay! it is Christ in me, who is the hope of glory. I have not earned this glory; it is not my natural birthright; it is the purchase of my Saviour's spotless obedience, and expiating blood. For a wretched child of want and despair; for the rebel, the outcast, and the beggar he bought it; He, who for me, lay in a manger, hung upon the cross, and now reigns in heaven; and, what is strangest of all, he has given himself to me, as a pledge and assurance that he has made me an heir of glory; for Christ is in me the hope of glory. He has softened my heart; he has dispelled my delusions; he has purified my soul; he has detached mine affections from the world and raised them to heaven; he has brought peace to my mind—the peace of reconciliation; and with the peace of reconciliation he has brought the hope of glory. Thou alone, Lord Jesus, art my helper and redeemer, my trust and my stay. All my troubles on earth are sweetened and forgotten in the hope which thou hast given me of seeing thy face in the heavens, and sharing thy joy."

Most precious, my dear brethren, is this hope of glory—the hope peculiar to that dispensation of the gospel which hath brought life and immortality to light. It is not a hope that maketh ashamed ; it is not a hope that perishes ; it is not a hope that shall be cut off, suddenly ended ; it is not a hope that is like a spider's web, easily torn and swept away ; it is not that hope which in holy scripture is described like the giving up of the ghost ; but it is a hope firm as the Rock of Ages upon which it is built, enduring as the joy of the Holy Ghost by which it is inspired.

When we last assembled in this house of God, one youthful member of our little society of worshippers was with us, who had contended against the pains and infirmities of mortal disease, to present himself then for the last time, as it proved, in the sanctuary. In suffering and in weakness, he came to join in our praises and prayers ; but now we see him no more ; he hath been removed, as we trust we have good grounds for believing, to a land of rest, whose blessed inhabitants worship in temples not made with hands. From a world where he could hold communion with his dear Redeemer only through the services of the church, and private prayer, and the reading of the most comforting gospel of Jesus Christ, he hath gone, as we feel ourselves warranted in hoping, to that world of spirits, where the ransomed of the Lord

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are present with their Saviour; and hear the discourse of infinite love and wisdom, from the lips of the chief minister of the church himself, the divine preacher of paradise. The amiable youth of whose endearing society and converse, in this world at least, it has been the will of our heavenly Father to deprive us, was known to several of us from his earliest childhood, who had opportunity of observing with affectionate interest, the fair growth and blossoming of those attractive qualities, which won the attachment of all of us who knew him at all, even for a comparatively brief period, during the latter days of his short existence. To improve his example; to incite others, and more especially the young, to follow after those blessed things which brought him comfort and strength in his last hours; to make his early departure a remembrancer to all of us of the uncertainty of human life; to notice some of those considerations, which are calculated to alleviate the grief of his sorrowing friends; this is my office now; not to speak the praises of the deceased, nor even to dwell upon the feelings which I myself entertained towards him, yet this I may be allowed to say, that, as it was in this church he renewed in confirmation the solemn vows of baptism, I felt a peculiar solicitude in his spiritual welfare. Most happy, therefore, was I, with others of his anxious friends, to find that the native gentleness and do-

cility with which God had endowed him, rendered him a willing and thoughtful recipient of heavenly truth, and greatly facilitated his special preparation for his approaching change. I had some fears at first—and they were almost my only fears—that this very amiability might be regarded by himself not in its proper light, and might prove a snare to him. I was apprehensive lest it should be made a ground of reliance, and thus detract from the singleness and the fulness of his confidence in that atonement, without which there is no remission of sins ; no reconciliation with God ; no hope of a blessed immortality. From the very beginning, therefore, I felt it my duty to remind him, that sweetness of temper and unrepining endurance, are indeed, necessary christian graces, but are not in the slightest degree, meritorious in the sight of God. I cautioned him against indulging in any complacent retrospect of his former life ; but his subsequent demeanour was sufficient to assure me that the caution was scarcely needed. I never heard him make a single allusion to those pleasing traits of character which had gathered round him so many sympathising friends : he spoke not one word of the comparative innocence of his life ; whilst, in answer to my inquiries, he professed his sole reliance on the blood of Christ for the pardon of his sins, and for acceptance with God ; and, so far as outward signs of contrition form a safe

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criterion for judging of the state of the heart, we have every reason for entertaining the consoling persuasion, that he cast himself at the foot of the cross with that thorough self-abasement which is felt, and felt with the profoundest humiliation, even by christians who have attained to eminent conformity to their Redeemer, and have spent long and exemplary lives in the observance of his laws, and the enjoyment of his love.

Sweetness of temper, amiability of disposition, and habits which are quiet, gentle, virtuous, and pure, these—when they spring from the right principle, love for Christ—are amongst the fruits and evidences of a living faith. But let me admonish you, especially my younger brethren, to shun most carefully the self-deception of building upon these, in any measure, your hopes of salvation. Even where the root of the tree is holy, and its fruits are holy, you are not justified and saved on account of those fruits: you receive your acquittal from condemnation and your title to heaven, not because you are kind and meek and amiable, but because Christ died for you, and his grace has enabled you to exhibit the virtues of his true disciples, and to appropriate the benefits of his atonement to the redemption of your souls. But woe be to those nominal christians who are destitute of christian graces, who pretend, and only pretend, that they love their Divine Master;

devoid of those social and moral virtues, without which there can be no living and justifying faith; without which the personation of the christian character is a mockery; and every fanciful notion, that we are dear to Christ, and secure of his intercession, a deep and dangerous delusion.

The earthly career of our young brother has been soon terminated; but in the dispensations of Divine Providence, it is no inconsistency that the ingathering of fruits should be in the spring-time of life; that the freshness of youth and the maturity of harvest, should go together. "Such words as 'untimely' and 'premature,' are not found in the vocabulary of faith." God's dealings all come to pass in the right time; and his time, we may be sure, is the best. In the christian's creed, the death of the tender infant which is taken from its mother's arms, as the morning dew is exhaled by the sun's rays from the flower, is not at all more untimely than the death of the patriarch, whose head has been blanched by the changes and commotions of a hundred years. Both are God's doing, and both must be equitable and good. And what if the delicate plant which was the delight of our eyes be soon cut down! The heart, thus sorely smitten, will feel the blow; and the natural emotions of grief God will not rebuke. But let us not forget to lay hold, when we can, of his "comforts which refresh the soul;" let us not fail, in the

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hours of sorrowful meditation, to fall back upon the hope of the gospel—where scripture warrants us in applying that hope—that “the flower which hath faded in Adam, blossoms anew in Christ, never to fade again.”

May you seek and find grace, my dear young friends, to lay this event seriously to heart. There is no reason that the peaceful and happy death of our young brother should oppress you with gloom; but, I trust it will make you reflect. Some of you, I fear, are not as thoughtful about the concerns of your never-dying souls as you should be. Far be it from me to chase a single smile from your faces, which is the expression of innocent joy; but, believe me, levity and indifference as to the world of spirits are sadly out of place in beings who may be called into that world at any moment of their lives. It is with a most engaging aspect that religion meets you now, as the adviser, comforter, and guide of your departed brother. To him the minister of religion was a welcome visitor; to him religious counsels and religious truths were sweet; frequent prayer brought strength, and God's word was the richest treasure. To what, but the sustaining comforts of our blessed religion, are we to ascribe his composure and resignation beneath a malady peculiarly productive of nervous agitation? Esteem religion, then, as the dying christian esteems it, and you will be glad to enthrone it in

your hearts ; you will deem it eminently worthy of your warmest affections ; you will think it venerable and lovely indeed. "Remember now thy Creator" saith the wise Preacher, "in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not." Trial and distress, in various degrees, are the inevitable portion of our fallen and sinful race. This world is a scene of change as well as of sorrow, and affords no guarantee against its own vicissitudes—no safeguard against the "evil days." But, what the best things of earthly prosperity, and the most ingenious contrivances of earthly wisdom cannot avert, the gospel has a cordial to mitigate, a more than magical power to transform ; so that when the "evil days" shall come—as come they will—happy will ye be if ye have the light of the Almighty to enlighten, and the candle of the Lord's favour to shine upon your path.

Now unto him who hath brought life and immortality to light through his blessed gospel ; to him with whom the souls of the faithful, after they are delivered from the burden of the flesh, are in joy and felicity ; to him who shall change our vile bodies that they may be made like unto his glorious body ; to the only begotten Son, with the Father and Holy Ghost, three persons but one God, be ascribed all glory and majesty, dominion and power ; both now and ever. *Amen.*

A SERMON,
ON
OCCASION OF THE DEATH
OF
HARRIETT,

WIFE OF

Lieut. Col. the Hon. Joseph Wells,

PREACHED APRIL 23RD, 1851,

AT

ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, TORONTO,

BY THE

REV. J. G. D. MCKENZIE, M.A.,

INCUMBENT.

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A SERMON,

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"I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."—Rev. xiv. 13.

OF THE delights and the joys of heaven, we must reckon not amongst the least captivating, the release which it confers from the toils and trials of earth,—the rest which it affords,—the rest for the weary soul,—rest not only for the o'er-laden, aching heart, but—after the body's resurrection—rest for the sickly, suffering body too. Wanderers of a stormy and perilous sea, how fervently ought we *all* to long—how fervently *do* christians, true disciples, long—for the perfect calm which reigns in God's eternal temple; for the secure and unruffled haven of the ransomed christian's quiet home beyond the skies. Pardon

for our sins ; rest for our bodies ; peace for our souls ;—ought not these to be the grand aim,—ought not these to form the chief subject of every aspiration, and of every prayer, with creatures like ourselves, moving amid the shadows and the sorrows of a sinful and a suffering state ?

That voice from heaven—that angelic annunciation recorded in the text—may well touch, and powerfully touch, our hearts. Is it the secret of eloquence to explore and to grasp the feelings of your audience, and to use just such an address as will fall in with the current of their feelings ? The angel's words, then, are eloquence indeed. They strike a chord which the fears and the hopes of nature herself—of nature longing after immortality—has made to vibrate in our hearts. They speak the language of affectionate sympathy in every pang that we feel—they meet and they remove our intense anxiety—they do all but actually open the gates of heaven to our fixed and straining gaze—they tell us of blessedness and of rest ; and are not blessedness and rest the best things we can desire ? and who that values them at all, can value them at less than an infinite price ? or desire them with less than his whole heart ? “ I heard a voice from heaven,” saith the favoured apostle,—he who was favoured with visions which never man before or after him was privileged to behold,—“ I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed

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are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." But what is the meaning of the words, "from henceforth"? Was it not thus from the beginning of Christianity, that those who died in the Lord were blessed? Has this comforting truth at any time been obscured or contravened? If so, the announcement which the angel enjoined the apostle to write, must be taken to refer to that time. It will then be a prophetic intimation that the doctrine of the *immediate* happiness of the righteous after death should become darkened, in some way, by a corruption of gospel truth; but that, afterwards, "from henceforth," the darkness and the doubt which had for awhile prevailed in regard to the state of the departed saints of God should be cleared away, the consolation revived, and the persuasion re-established, as it was in the beginning, that, "blessed are the dead which die in the Lord!"

Has the *immediate* happiness of the righteous ever been called in question? Has this, amongst other gospel truths, ever suffered perversion?

I know that great caution, and a peculiarly reverent discretion ought to be evinced in attempting the interpretation of those Scripture prophecies which are not explained or fulfilled in holy Scripture itself; yet I may be permitted in

humility to say, that, to the best of my judgment, the general conclusion of commentators seems to be well founded that the prophecy has reference to the cruelties practised and the corruptions introduced by the church of Rome. In the verses preceding the text, we meet with predictions of persecutions and other circumstances, corresponding in a remarkable manner to the fierce and unscrupulous opposition manifested by the church of Rome to the progress of the Reformation. To encourage the saints to patience in suffering for the truth even unto death, the apostle showed that he heard a voice from heaven ordering him to write :—" Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord," (or in the true faith and hope of the gospel,) even "from henceforth." Nothing is said to leave room for apprehending that the blessedness of those who so die in the Lord, is for one moment deferred ; but the doctrine of purgatory brought in by the church of Rome does postpone that blessedness, representing it as necessary that the souls even of the *elect* should pass through a process of purification of fire, enduring, it may be, for a thousand years. The introduction of this grievous error, was of course a heavy discouragement to the faithful disciples of Jesus Christ ; it was, in point of fact, unwarrantably interposing, so far as man *could* interpose between them and the immediate rest purchased for them by the Redeemer's blood.

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But the Reformation was a recovery of the truth in this particular, and in others; and the hope of the righteous against which artful men had conspired, was restored to that fulness and clearness in which God has been pleased to bestow it upon his people. "From henceforth," then, from the period of the Reformation, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord;" that is, from this period, (such it seems is the import of the prophecy,) from this period believers will generally *understand* that encouraging truth, and not have to encounter the fears of purgatory, or to apprehend a delay of their felicity, when seized with the agonies of death, or called to suffer martyrdom for Christ's sake. Indeed, it is an undeniable fact, that the expectation of *immediate* happiness, was the joy and support of those numbers who perished at the stake, or were otherwise cruelly martyred during those times. This "voice from heaven" was attested by an internal suggestion of the Holy Spirit, who assured the apostle that believers rested after death from all their labours and sufferings, and, consequently could have no purgatory to fear, and that their works followed them, to prove the sincerity of their faith, and to ensure a gracious reward.

With this agree the words of various other passages of God's word, peculiarly emphatic and distinct. "To-day thou shalt be with me in

paradise ;" this was said to one about to die. It was placed before him as a reward ; there was no intervening time and no intervening place ; "*to-day* shalt thou be with me in *paradise* ;" and in the case of Lazarus, no intervening time is described, and no intervening place ; immediately after death he was found in Abraham's bosom. Again, take this passage,—“ Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might ; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom,” (and, consequently, no possibility of completing the soul's salvation by any kind of purification or probation) “ in the grave whither thou goest.”

But this momentous truth is best established by quoting whole classes of texts, rather than *single* ones. Take those, for instance, which refer to the universal and entire satisfaction of Christ, and the cessation of God's wrath thereupon, not partially, but altogether. “ There is therefore now *no condemnation* to them that are in Christ Jesus ;” that is, being justified by Christ, and through him forgiven, there is no relic of punishment any where awaiting them. “ Being justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.” There is no wrath remaining ; we are justified and saved from it altogether. Again, take that class of texts which describe the day of judgment. “ It is appointed unto man once to die, but after this the

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judgment." St. Paul did not say, "It is appointed unto men once to die, then to go through a state of purgation and cleansing in the fire of purgatory, and then the judgment." No, there is but one step, as far as sin is concerned, from death to judgment; and to the pardoned, therefore, but one step from death to happiness, glory, and rest. Again, what is the meaning of all that class of texts which urge the necessity of repentance and good works, and turning unto God *immediately* in this *life*, on the express ground that there is nothing further to be done towards salvation after this life? Such as:—"We beseech you that ye receive not the grace of God in vain." "Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation." "Exhort one another daily, while it is called to-day, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin;" while it is said, "To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." And the very words of Jesus himself, "I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day; the night cometh when no man can work." And, once more, consider that class of texts in which death is spoken of as a period of delight, and joy, and rest from labour, as though nothing after that remained of toil, or fear, or pain, or punishment. "We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the

heavens." The heavenly tabernacle succeeds the earthly ; there is no purgatorial tabernacle. " In this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven." Would language like this be suitable, if purgatory, pain, and punishment had to intervene? " To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better." Do not these earnest expressions of an eager desire on the part of the apostle to be eternally united to his Master, sound to us as though he expected that death would *immediately* admit him into that Master's presence? and Christ is not in purgatory, to meet the dying sinner there.

With Christ, then, as our friend, our surety, and our ransom, holy Scripture bids us confide our souls to the keeping of our loving Redeemer; and assures us, that in the bosom of our church, at the ransomed christian's dying hour, we shall rest in peace. There may be a failing and sinking of the flesh, but no fear of further unknown trial ; trial by fire, how severe we know not, and how long we know not; no apprehension is there of a mysterious state of suffering into which the soul is to be plunged without help, without Christ, without God. What language does *our* church, our reformed branch of the Catholic church, hold out to the dying penitent who breathes out his soul in tran-

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quail *faith* before his God and his Redeemer?—She bids him die in hope, even as he has lived in faith; she bids him be of good courage, for that the Lamb of God hath taken away the sins of the world; she tells him that he is fully, and without reservation, reconciled unto God, in his blood; she bids him speak his last word in joy, and breathe his last sigh in peace; in a word, the consolation which she brings is the consolation of the gospel, and is as the reiteration of the angel's announcement:—“Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord; even so, saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labours.” Death, too, is a change from unreal to real life. Here our life is subject to mortality; hemmed about, as it were, and harassed by the weakness of the body; but when once we have been unclothed of this perishable frame, the spirit, now contracted, will be released unto freedom, unmingled, unobstructed, buoyant, and boundless. Here we live straitened and afflicted with the body of this death; in heaven we shall live mightily and joyously unto God.

It is the cheering conviction that all this blessedness and this relief are made sure to the christian after death—made sure to him, no matter how full of sorrow, sickness, and suffering his life may be here below—it is, I repeat, this cheering conviction which affords us comfort, and moderates our grief in the surrender and the separation which it has

been God's good will to impose upon us in the death of an esteemed parishioner—the wife of one of our christian patriarchs. She whom we lament this morning was identified, we might say, with the history of this place; here she passed many of the brighter years of her life—when youth and unfaded beauty and strength were her's—and that those years were fruitful in affectionate friendships is proved by the large number of sincere mourners who deeply feel the twofold visitation which consigned her, at first, to a long period of weakness and disease, and has at length removed her from us. It causes me much regret that I did not possess the privilege enjoyed by her many sorrowing friends—that of knowing her when traits of character could be best discerned from the movements of the unimpaired mind, ere God, in his wise and assuredly merciful providence, thought it good to shade with languor and sickness the sunshine of her days. I could wish that an acquaintance had commenced in a happier time—had commenced when the ties of schoolfellowship bound me to one of her afflicted sons with the strength of a more than ordinary attachment and regard. This, however, was not my privilege, so that I cannot now say so much as I desire concerning the departed: though, you will readily believe that all I say is the language of one who unites with the most afflicted, in the depression

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which they feel. It was not until she became a parishioner of mine that our intimate acquaintance commenced, and even then sickness had wrought in her a melancholy change. But what though, with her, "life's evening ray" was languid and chill; what though it had lost its power to enliven and to cheer; it had a deep, though a saddening, interest notwithstanding. We dwell with fondness on the fair scenes of childhood, and love in afterlife to recal its joyous associations, even when those scenes have been defaced, and those blithe and pure associations come back to us shaded with the gloom of the remembrance that what hath once been can be no more. I find no difficulty in comprehending, and I can cordially sympathise in the pang which those must have felt who sorrowfully witnessed the gradual fading of a dear friend, whom they had known as a woman of uncommon attraction. What, then, is earthly beauty, or vivacity, or strength? Who will make these their confidence and their pride? Who will suffer themselves to be beguiled by these from seeking God's enduring love, and preparing for the inheritance of things imperishable, in the christian's home beyond the skies? But these are mournful thoughts, and these are far from being the only thoughts connected with the decease of her whom we mourn. You have seen her visit the sanctuary, Sunday after Sunday, when her enfeebled limbs

scarcely sufficed to bear up her sinking frame. You have seen her, time after time, approaching the holy table, with tottering step, and with trembling hand receiving the memorial of her Redeemer's atoning death. You have seen her join in the ordinances of religion when the *couch* rather than the church would have been deemed by many a reasonable and a needful concession to bodily infirmity. And what though she were unable, at times, to grasp all the associations of the devotional duties which she performed? Were those duties profitless, or comfortless? Cannot God's Spirit occupy the christian's mind, though, as to intellectual effort, it be even as a dismantled fortress and a desolate habitation? Are angels forbid to whisper peace—to minister mysterious consolations to the soul which seems to us to be subsiding into lethargy and to be hidden in the twilight of its fading powers? And may not many of those hours which, in the latter years of the lamented deceased, were reckoned by us hours of unconsciousness, may these not have been really hours of precious, though silent communion with heaven: hours when the soul, in its apparent slumber, was visited by that God who, whether we sleep or wake, continues still the sanctifier, the guardian, and the friend. But with the deceased, all this, we rejoice to believe, is over; the twilight shadows of earth have been dispelled, and the morning of

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a happy eternity, in unclouded beauty, has risen upon her. The body is at rest, waiting to be renewed in strength at the resurrection; and from the mind, the cloud, we trust, has been for ever dispelled: dispelled by the light of paradise, and by the surpassing intellect of the glorified saint. Mother and son are sleeping side by side, as to the body; and as to the soul, are living, too, side by side, as we trust, in glory. Let us, then, seek comfort by striving to realise, through faith, that voice from heaven (and from heaven only, not from reason, not from philosophy, can we hear it) which uttereth this triumphant and thrilling declaration:—"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord: Yea, saith the Spirit" (oh! may the Spirit confirm it to our hearts!) "that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."



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